

LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

1110 Mateo Street, Los Angeles CA 90021
213 395 0762 | gallery@luisdejesus.com
luisdejesus.com

John M. Valadez

John M. Valadez (b.1951, Los Angeles, CA) is a painter, photographer, and muralist living and working in Los Angeles, CA. Valadez studied at East Los Angeles Junior College from 1970-72 and earned his BFA at California State University, Long Beach in 1976. From 2012-13, Valadez's critically acclaimed 35-year retrospective, *Santa Ana Condition* at The San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, CA traveled to the National Mexican Museum of Art, Chicago, IL, and the Vincent Price Museum, East Los Angeles College. In 2017, Valadez was honored with the Vincent and Mary Price Legacy Award from the Vincent Price Art Museum, along with a distant Joan Mitchell Fellowship award.

As a trailblazer of the early Chicano Arts Movement in the 70s and 80s, following the Chicano Civil Rights Movement of the 60s and 70s, his work has come to define an iconography of Chicano experience in the city by catalyzing its changing dynamics and reconstructing a mythical allegory that speaks to an alternative vision. Through his multidisciplinary practice, spanning documentary photography and portraiture, public murals, ambitiously scaled paintings, and pastel works, Valadez cultivated a style of his own that transcends genre designations. Never settling into one box, in medium, concept, style, or theme; the transmutations in his work evoke a fluidity between multiple cultures and visual lexicons.

Lauded for his groundbreaking realist paintings, with "high art" techniques radically applied to everyday, urban, and working-class scenes of Los Angeles, Valadez was one of the first painters to portray social commentaries and witnessed encounters with dignity, pride, and the distinctive aesthetics of his communities in Downtown, Boyle Heights and East LA. A distinguishable factor in Valadez's social practice throughout the decades is that his paintings don't merely depict his community, but also gives agency to facilitate dialogue and imagine their own outcomes. Valadez's implementation of mannerism, abstraction, and montage as a vehicle for allegory and vigorous storytelling activates a myriad of socio-political and economic conversations. However, it is Valadez's dynamic use of realism that exemplifies a necessary centering of such critical discourses in humanity.

Valadez has exhibited in major canonical exhibitions contextualizing Chicano and Mexican-American art internationally. Recent group exhibition highlights include *Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; *Mapping an Art World: Los Angeles in the 1970's-80's*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; *XICAN-A.O.X.BODY* at: The Cheech, Riverside, CA, and The Perez Art Museum, Miami, FL; *Traitor, Survivor, Icon: La Malinche and the Conquest of Mexico* at: Denver Art Museum, CO, Albuquerque Museum of Art, NM, and San Antonio Museum of Art, TX; *Building Bridges In Time Of Walls: Chicano / Mexican Art from Los Angeles to Mexico* at: Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City, DF, MX, Museo de las Artes Universidad de Guadalajara, JA, MX, and Centro

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Cultural Tijuana, BC, MX; *Down These Mean Streets: Community and Place in Urban Photography* at: the Smithsonian American Art Museum Washington, DC and El Museo del Barrio New York, NY; *Chicano Dream*, Musee d' Aquitaine, Bordeaux, FR; *The Latino Presence In American Art*, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C; *Chicano Visions-American Painters on the Verge* at: San Antonio Museum, TX, De Young Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, CA, Wiseman Art Museum, Minneapolis, MN, the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC, and the Albuquerque Mexican Culture Center, NM; *Mexicanidad*, Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Chicago, IL; *The Road to Aztlan: Art from a Mythic Homeland*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; and many other seminal group exhibitions throughout the decades.

Valadez is included in numerous institutional collections notably, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Brooklyn Museum, NY; National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian, Washington, DC; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA; The Cheech Marin Collection, Riverside, CA; The Mexican Museum, San Francisco, CA; The Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, FL; National Mexican Museum, Chicago, IL; Centre d'Art, Santa Monica, Barcelona, ES; El Centro Cultural Tijuana, BC, MX; Musee d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux, FR; University of California at Los Angeles Research Library Dept. of Special Collections, Los Angeles, CA; Gerald Buck Art Collection at the University California at Irvine, CA; Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin, TX; the University of New Mexico, Las Cruces, NM; amongst others. Valadez has numerous federal and state mural commissions throughout California, Texas, and France.